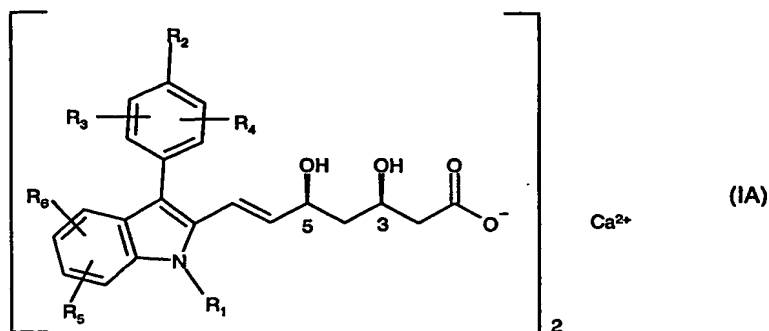


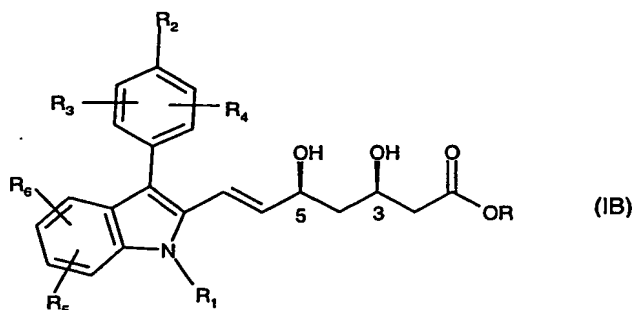
What is claimed is:

1. A calcium salt of the formula

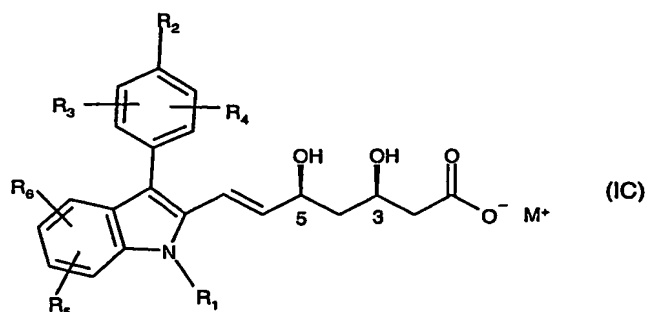


wherein R_1 is alkyl, cycloalkyl or aralkyl; R_2 , R_3 and R_4 are independently hydrogen, halogen or alkyl; R_5 and R_6 are independently hydrogen, halogen, alkyl, cycloalkyl, aralkyl, alkoxy or aralkoxy; and the hydroxyl group at the 3-position is in the R-configuration and at the 5-position in the S-configuration; or an enantiomer thereof; or a hydrate thereof; obtainable by a process comprising:

(1) hydrolyzing a compound of the formula



wherein R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , R_5 and R_6 have meanings as defined for formula IA; R represents lower alkyl; and the hydroxyl group at the 3-position is in the R-configuration and at the 5-position in the S-configuration; or an enantiomer thereof; in the presence of an aqueous base to afford an alkali metal salt of the formula



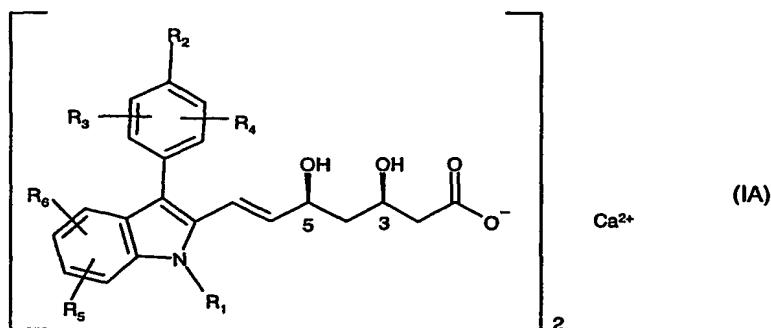
wherein M represents sodium, lithium or potassium; and

(2) treating the alkali metal salt of formula IC with a calcium compound to afford the calcium salt of formula IA.

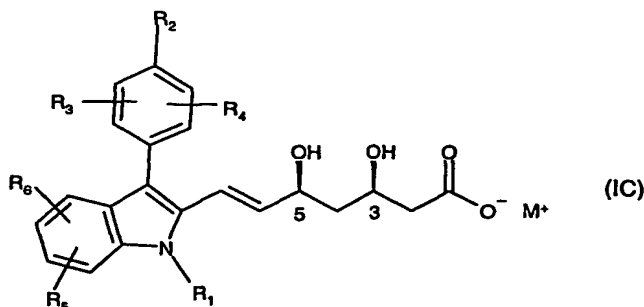
2. A calcium salt according to claim 1, obtainable by a process wherein the aqueous base in step (1) is sodium hydroxide and M in formula IC represents sodium and wherein the calcium compound in step (2) is calcium chloride.

3. A calcium salt according to claim 1, wherein R_1 is isopropyl, R_2 is fluorine, and R_3 , R_4 , R_5 and R_6 are hydrogen.

4. A calcium salt of the formula



wherein R_1 is alkyl, cycloalkyl or aralkyl; R_2 , R_3 and R_4 are independently hydrogen, halogen or alkyl; R_5 and R_6 are independently hydrogen, halogen, alkyl, cycloalkyl, aralkyl, alkoxy or aralkoxy; and the hydroxyl group at the 3-position is in the R-configuration and at the 5-position in the S-configuration; or an enantiomer thereof; or a hydrate thereof; obtainable by treating an alkali metal salt of the formula



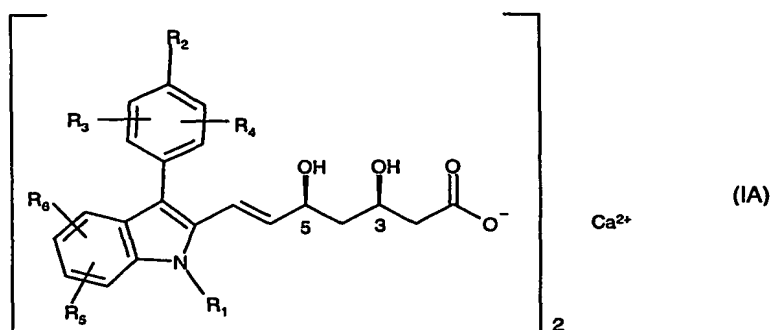
wherein R_1 , R_2 , R_3 , R_4 , R_5 and R_6 have meanings as defined for formula IA; M represents sodium, lithium or potassium; and the hydroxyl group at the 3-position is in the R-

configuration and at the 5-position in the S-configuration; or an enantiomer thereof; or a hydrate thereof; with a calcium compound to afford the calcium salt of formula IA.

5. A calcium salt according to claim 4, obtainable by a process wherein M in formula IC represents sodium and the calcium compound is calcium chloride.

6. A calcium salt according to claim 4, wherein R_1 is isopropyl, R_2 is fluorine, and R_3 , R_4 , R_5 and R_6 are hydrogen.

7. A crystalline calcium salt of the formula

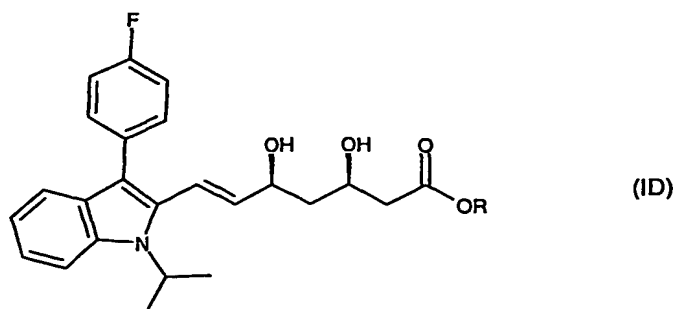


wherein R_1 is isopropyl; R_2 is fluorine; R_3 , R_4 , R_5 and R_6 are hydrogen; and the hydroxyl group at the 3-position is in the R-configuration and at the 5-position in the S-configuration; or an enantiomer thereof; or a hydrate thereof.

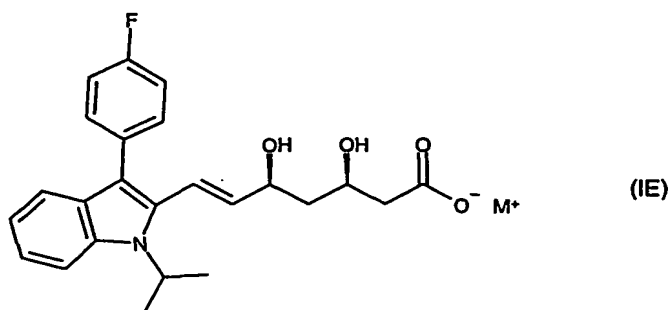
8. A crystalline calcium salt according to claim 7, which has a powder X-ray diffraction pattern with maxima at 2θ values of 5.3, 11.8, 13.9, 17.5, 19.1, 22.0 and 23.1 and which has a melting point of about 220°C.

9. A method for the preparation of a crystalline calcium salt according to claim 7, which method comprises:

(1) hydrolyzing a compound of the formula



wherein R represents lower alkyl; and the hydroxyl group at the 3-position is in the R-configuration and at the 5-position in the S-configuration; or an enantiomer thereof; in the presence of an aqueous base to afford an alkali metal salt of the formula

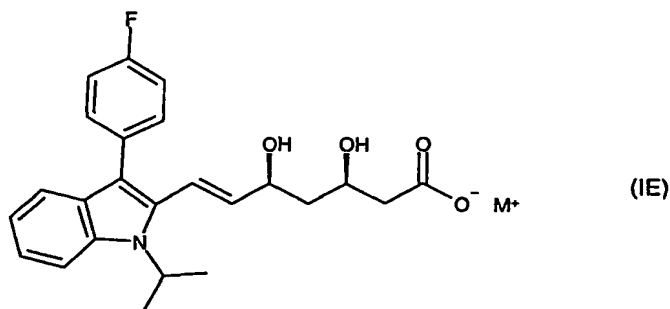


wherein M represents sodium, lithium or potassium; and

(2) treating the alkali metal salt of formula IE with a calcium compound to afford the crystalline calcium salt according to claim 7.

10. The method according to claim 9, wherein the aqueous base in step (1) is sodium hydroxide and M in formula IE represents sodium and wherein the calcium compound in step (2) is calcium chloride.

11. A method for the preparation of a crystalline calcium salt according to claim 7, which method comprises treating an alkali metal salt of the formula



wherein M represents sodium, lithium or potassium; and the hydroxyl group at the 3-position is in the R-configuration and at the 5-position in the S-configuration; or an enantiomer thereof; or a hydrate thereof; with a calcium compound to afford the crystalline calcium salt according to claim 7.

12. The method according to claim 11, wherein M in formula IE represents sodium and the calcium compound is calcium chloride.

13. A pharmaceutical composition comprising a therapeutically effective amount of a calcium salt according to claim 7 in combination with one or more pharmaceutically acceptable carriers.

14. A method for the prevention and/or treatment of hypercholesterolemia, hyperlipoproteinemia, dyslipidemia and atherosclerosis, which method comprises administering to a mammal in need thereof a therapeutically effective amount of a calcium salt according to claim 7.